

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 14866 280316Z  
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AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
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UNCLAS HONG KONG 14866

FOR AGRICULTURE, FAS, ASST. ADMINISTRATOR, FOREIGN COMMODITY  
ANALYSIS;  
INFO: DIRECTOR, INFORMATION DIVISION  
FROM: AGRICULTURAL OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: EAGR, CH  
SUBJECT: PRC GRAIN HARVEST AT RECORD 300-MILLION TON LEVEL: PRELIMI-

NARY ASSESSMENT

REF: (A) HONGKONG 15282 OF DEC 31 1975; (B) TOFAS 81 (HK 11504);  
(C) HONGKONG 10401; (D) HONGKONG 10161; (E) HONGKONG 8392

BEGIN SUMMARY: PROVINCE-BY-PROVINCE ANALYSIS OF AVAILABLE INFOR-  
MATION ON CHINA'S 1976 GRAIN HARVEST INDICATES PROBABLE INCREASE  
OF 4 TO 6 PERCENT OVER 1975 GRAIN PRODUCTION. BASED ON AGOFFICE  
ESTIMATE OF 289 MILLION METRIC TONS (MT) IN 1975, CHINA'S TOTAL  
GRAIN PRODUCTION IN 1976 SHOULD RANGE BETWEEN 300 AND 306 MILLION  
MT. ALTHOUGH THIS PROVINCIAL-LEVEL ASSESSMENT MUST BE CONSIDERED  
AS "PRELIMINARY" AND THUS SUBJECT TO REVISION AS MORE INFORMATION  
BECOMES AVAILABLE, IT SUPPORTS OFFICIAL CLAIMS THAT 1976 WAS 15TH  
CONSECUTIVE YEAR SINCE 1962 WITH BUMPER HARVEST (WHICH WAS  
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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 HONG K 14866 280316Z

OBTAINED IN SPITE OF NATURAL CALAMITIES). ALSO, IT DOES NOT  
APPEAR LIKELY THAT INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT BECOME AVAILABLE LATER  
WILL REQUIRE ANY SUBSTANTIAL DOWNGRADING OF ESTIMATED INCREASE.  
END SUMMARY.

1. AN ANALYSIS OF OFFICIAL CHINESE REPORTS CLAIMING EITHER  
RECORD GRAIN HARVESTS OR INCREASES IN BOTH PRODUCTION AND YIELDS

OF GRAIN FOR A NUMBER OF PROVINCES, REVEALS A PROBABLE INCREASE OF 4- TO 6-PERCENT IN TOTAL GRAIN PRODUCTION THIS YEAR COMPARED TO 1975. WITH 1975 GRAIN PRODUCTION ESTIMATED BY AGOFFICE AT 289 MILLION METRIC TONS (REF A), 1976 GRAIN PRODUCTION APPEARS TO HAVE REACHED AT LEAST THE 300-MILLION MT LEVEL ESTIMATED THREE MONTHS AGO BY AGOFFICE (REF B); AND PROBABLY HIGHER.

2. RESULTS OF PROVINCIAL-LEVEL ANALYSIS ARE CONSISTENT WITH OFFICIAL CLAIMS OF NATIONAL-LEVEL BUMPER HARVEST FOR 1976 WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN CHINESE PRESS, MOST RECENTLY IN STATEMENT MADE AT SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEARNING FROM TACHAI (WHICH IS STILL UNDERWAY IN PEKING). IN NOTING THAT THIS YEAR'S "BUMPER" HARVEST WAS 15TH CONSECUTIVE SINCE 1962, NATIONAL-LEVEL REPORTS GENERALLY REFERED TO ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS DURING CROP SEASON.

3. THUS FAR IN DECEMBER, A LARGE NUMBER OF OFFICIAL CLAIMS FOR PROVINCIAL-LEVEL UNITS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED: (A) "RECORD" GRAIN HARVEST IN HOPEH, PEKING, SHANTUNG (OVER 10 PERCENT ABOVE 1975), HONAN, ANHWEI (10 PERCENT ABOVE 1975), AND TSINGHAI; AND (B) "BOTH PRODUCTION AND YIELDS AT ALL-TIME HIGHS" IN HUNAN, HUPEH, KWANGTUNG AND SINGJUANG.

4. OTHER PUBLISHED COMMENTS AND CLAIMS FOR 1976 INCLUDE FOLLOWING: (A) SHANSI--FURTHER INCREASE OVER 1975 WHEN GRAIN-SURPLUS STATUS WAS ATTAINED; (B) INNER MONGOLIA--SPRING WHEAT 30-PERCENT INCREASE AND AUTUMN GRAINS 20-PERCENT INCREASE; (C) KIANGSU--GOOD HARVEST, 8 PERCENT ABOVE 1975; (D) KWANGSI--PRODUCTION INCREASE OF 8 PERCENT; (E) TIBET--BUMPER HARVEST, 7.8 PERCENT INCREASE; (F) KIANGSI--PRODUCTION OF INTERMEDIATE AND SINGLE-CROP LATE RICE ABOVE 1975 AND DOUBLE-CROP LATE RICE EXPECTED TO BE ABOVE 1975; (G) KANSU--GRAIN CROP IN "CORRIDOR" REGION (APPROX. ONE-THIRD OF TOTAL GRAIN AREA)  
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PAGE 03 HONG K 14866 280316Z

10 PERCENT LARGER THAN 1975; (H) SZECHWAN (LARGEST GRAIN PRODUCER IN CHINA)--BOTH CORN AND RICE "GROWING WELL" (EARLIER REPORT).

5. THOSE PROVINCE-LEVEL UNITS (PARAS 3 AND 4, ABOVE) COMPRISE APPROX. 76-77 PERCENT CHINA'S TOTAL GRAIN AREA. REPORTS ON BALANCE OF GRAIN AREA, 23-24 PERCENT, ARE FRAGMENTARY AT BEST, BUT DO PROVIDE INDICATIONS OF RESULTS THIS YEAR: (A) HEILUNGKIANG, KIRIN AND LIAONING PROVINCES (WITH APPROX. 10 PERCENT OF NATIONAL GRAIN AREA) EACH CLAIMED INCREASE IN SPRING WHEAT PRODUCTION; (B) NINGHSIA--RECORD WHEAT HARVEST; (C) SHANGHAI, CHEKIANG AND KWEICHOW--INCREASE IN WINTER GRAIN AND/OR EARLY RICE.

6. IN EXPLAINING FAVORABLE RESULTS OF 1976 IN FACE OF NATURAL ADVERSITIES, MANY PROVINCIAL REPORTS HIGHLIGHTED FOLLOWING: (A) UNPRECEDENTED, LARGE-SCALE LAND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS CARRIED OUT IN WINTER 1975-SPRING 1976 SEASON; (B) UNPRECEDENTED EFFORTS OF COMMUNE MEMBERS IN EXPANDING IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE FACILITIES; AND (C) UNPRECEDENTED LARGE NUMBERS OF HIGH-LEVEL

CADRES MOVING INTO COUNTRYSIDE TO LIVE AND WORK WITH PEASANTS  
IN "STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP IN LEARNING FROM TACHAI."

7. COMMENT: PROVINCE-BY-PROVINCE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS RESULTS  
IN ASSESSMENT THAT 20 PROVINCES WITH THREE-QUARTERS OF CHINA'S  
TOTAL GRAIN AREA (SEE PARAS 3 AND 4 ABOVE) FOR WHICH INFORMATION  
IS MORE COMPLETE THAN FOR REMAINING ONE-QUARTER, (SEE PARA 5  
ABOVE) ACHIEVED AN ESTIMATED WEIGHTED INCREASE IN GRAIN  
PRODUCTION (ADJUSTED TO A NATIONAL-LEVEL BASIS) OF 3.85 PERCENT  
OVER 1975.

8. FRAGMENTARY REPORTS FOR 9 PROVINCES IN REMAINING ONE-QUARTER  
OF CHINA'S GRAIN AREA INDICATE PROBABLE OVERALL INCREASE ABOVE  
1975 WHICH NOT ONLY WOULD PRESERVE NATIONAL-LEVEL INCREASE OF  
NEARLY 4 PERCENT ACHIEVED BY 20 PROVINCES (PARA 7, ABOVE), BUT  
WOULD RAISE THE PERCENTAGE LEVEL BY POSSIBLY ONE OR TWO POINTS,  
WHICH WOULD PRODUCE NATIONAL-LEVEL INCREASE OF APPROX. 4-6  
PERCENT. IF NO OVERALL INCREASE WAS IN FACT ACHIEVED BY THE  
9-PROVINCE COMPONENT, TOTAL 1976 GRAIN PRODUCTION WOULD STILL  
BE NEARLY 4 PERCENT ABOVE 1975. IF THERE WERE A DECREASE  
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PAGE 04 HONG K 14866 280316Z

FROM 1975--WHICH SEEMS HIGHLY UNLIKELY ON BASIS OF AVAILABLE  
RECENT INFORMATION AND EARLIER ASSESSMENTS OF RECORD WINTER  
WHEAT AND EARLY RICE HARVEST (REFS C, D AND E)--OVERALL  
INCREASE IN TOTAL GRAIN PRODUCTION THIS YEAR WOULD BE CORRES-  
PONDINGLY LOWER THAN CALCULATED INCREASE OF 3.85 PERCENT.

9. NOTE: IT IS REMINDED THAT QUANTITATIVE COMPONENTS OF  
PROVINCIAL ANALYSIS WERE IN PART BASED ON FRAGMENTARY INFOR-  
MATION OR ASSUMPTIONS AND THEREFORE THIS ASSESSMENT MUST BE  
CONSIDERED AS "PRELIMINARY". IF AND WHEN MORE HARVEST  
INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE FOR THOSE PROVINCES NOW ANALYZED  
ON THE BASIS OF ASSUMPTIONS, IT MAY WELL BE THAT CHINA'S 1976  
TOTAL GRAIN HARVEST WILL PROVE TO BE NEARER THE 305-MILLION  
MT LEVEL THAN THE 300-MILLION MT LEVEL.  
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## Message Attributes

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